IHSA 81-045

SECRET

8 December 1981

25X1

25X1

MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted]
Information Handling Systems Architect

FROM: [redacted]
Chairman, Working Group on Continuity
and Contingency

SUBJECT: Working Group II Report

I. Introduction

a. As you requested, the Working Group met on 2 and 3 November to discuss Continuity and Contingency Planning, review two point papers prepared by your staff, address specific issues and discussion questions contained in these papers and, in addition, review some possible goals that were prepared by the IHSA.

b. After two productive days, it was unanimously agreed that further discussion, research or briefings would not significantly alter nor enhance the conclusion and recommendations as set forth below and consequently no additional sessions were scheduled.

c. What follows is essentially a distillation of the opinions, concerns and requirements expressed by the individual Group members. While there are inevitably some individual reservations concerning language and emphasis, it does reflect the opinion of the Group as a whole.

d. The Group wishes to commend your staff for the relevant and lucid point papers which both stimulated and guided our discussions. The difficulty of our task would have been significantly compounded without them.

II. Continuity and Availability

a. Current Status

User components of information handling services generally agree that they are reasonably satisfied with present services, and they believe that the availability of most of their systems is now adequate, given the current level of dependency on those systems. Since many of the traditional information handling techniques are generally still available as fallback measures, the current 96 to 98 percent availability figures leave most users satisfied. Although the published availability figures are perceived as being reasonably accurate, availability, from the users perspective, is primarily a function of timing. That is, while an availability figure of 98 percent over a given measurement period appears to be more than

adequate, if the users critical access requirement falls within the unavailable 2 percent, the statistic is academic.

The concept of serviceability, that is, the maximum amount of contiguous down time that can be operationally absorbed during any one outage, is very significant to the user community and they relate with it better than with the traditional availability figures. Users are singularly concerned that the period of outage be held to a minimum and that maintenance support be responsive. While recognizing that system availability also measures this factor, the users relate better to the concept of minutes (or hours) of outage, the responsiveness of technical personnel and the extent of the spare parts inventory to minimize outage conditions than they do to availability statistics.

The prospect of incurring long IHS outages is extremely unnerving and erodes the confidence of the user community. As user personnel become more and more dependent on IHSs to perform critical job functions, the cost of not having the service available equates directly to lost manhours and, perhaps, a loss of critical intelligence functions.

b. Anticipated Requirements

It was immutably clear to this Working Group that the future will bring ever greater dependency and more diverse functionality upon IHSs. In the future there will simply be few, if any, options available; when IHSs are denied, production ceases. Use of terminal devices to support a host of word processing or office automation services is one of many specific areas where the impact of availability will be paramount. Secondly, there will be a significant increase in the number of users posing greater demands upon the IHS capabilities. As one user stated, "If its all I've got, I've got to have it!" Hence, for particularly critical functions, many users can honestly support an availability requirement approaching 100 percent.

As you requested in the robustness paper, users have provided their perceived availability and serviceability requirements figures for current and anticipated systems. These figures were based on a sense of today's availability service plus a feel for future needs. Other than drawing from the sample calculations for Ao from page 4 of the robustness paper, there were no scientific algorithms from which the determinations were derived, and the figures must be classified as a "best guess" on the part of the user community. The completed table, originally identified as Tables 4 and 5 in the robustness paper, is found as Appendix I of this paper.